

**INTERNATIONAL SECURITY / MIDDLE EAST UPDATE**  
**January 17 - 23, 2014**

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**1. [Kerry Says World Has Obligation to Bring Peace to Syrian People](#) (01-22-2014)**

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.  
Staff Writer

Washington — Syria's conflict began as a peaceful protest by schoolchildren and escalated into a civil war with thousands dead and millions more displaced from their homes, Secretary of State John Kerry says.

"If we put our common energies together, we can forge a resolution that can provide peace to the region and peace to the people of Syria," Kerry said January 22 at a one-day Syrian peace conference in Montreux, Switzerland. Kerry told delegates, "We really need to deal with reality. There is no way — no way possible in the imagination — that the man who has led the brutal response to his own people could regain the legitimacy to govern."

"The right to lead a country does not come from torture, nor barrel bombs, nor Scud missiles. It comes from the consent of the people," Kerry added.

The negotiations, known as Geneva II, are part of a U.N.-backed international conference with the aim of brokering a political resolution to the conflict begun in March 2011 that has created a massive humanitarian crisis. The international community is seeking to implement what is known

as the Geneva Communiqué, a plan agreed to on June 30, 2012, that would establish a transitional government in Syria that would bring an end to the conflict through peaceful dialogue and negotiations. The Assad family has governed Syria since 1970.

The peace negotiations are expected to continue through to the weekend as nations gather in Geneva and in nearby Davos for the annual World Economic Forum, which Kerry plans to attend. Achieving compromise and an agreement to move forward is a crucial first step in ending the violence and civil strife, Kerry said. More than 30 nations were participating in the conference.

According to the United Nations, since the civil war began more than 130,000 civilians have been killed; 2.3 million are registered refugees; an additional 6.5 million people are displaced inside Syria; and there have been at least 17 confirmed cases of polio, which had been eradicated in Syria more than a decade ago.

Kerry said the only thing standing between the Syrian people and peace is one man and his family “stubbornly clinging to power.”

“We have not only an opportunity, but we have an obligation to find a way forward so that the people of Syria can choose their leadership, know peace, and for 9 million refugees, finally be able to return home in dignity,” Kerry told delegates.

Related Articles:

[Kerry at Opening of Geneva II Conference on Syria](#)

[Kerry's Press Briefing Following Geneva II Conference on Syria](#)

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## **2. Implementation of Joint Plan of Action between P5+1 and Iran (01-21-2014)**

U.S. Department of State, Office of the Spokesperson, January 20, 2014

Implementation of the Joint Plan of Action from November 24, 2013 in Geneva between the P5+1 and the Islamic Republic of Iran and Provision of Limited, Temporary, and Targeted Sanctions Relief

*These actions implement U.S. commitments under the Joint Plan of Action, which is designed as a first step toward a peaceful and comprehensive solution to international concerns about Iran's nuclear program.*

On November 24, 2013, the United States and its partners in the P5+1 reached an initial understanding with Iran that halts progress on its nuclear program and rolls it back in key respects. As outlined in a Joint Plan of Action (JPOA), this initial understanding includes the first meaningful limits on Iran's nuclear program in close to a decade. In return for these important steps to constrain Iran's nuclear program, the P5+1 committed to provide Iran with limited, targeted, and reversible sanctions relief for a six-month period.

Today, the IAEA verified that Iran has fulfilled its initial nuclear commitments pursuant to the JPOA. Accordingly, the Administration has taken the necessary steps to pause efforts to further reduce Iranian crude oil exports, allowing the six current customers of Iranian oil to maintain their purchases at current reduced levels for the duration of the JPOA. In addition, the Administration is working with its partners and Iran to establish financial channels to enable Iran to make payments

for humanitarian transactions and medical expenses, university tuition payments for Iranian students studying abroad, and the payment of Iran's United Nations obligations.

Further, the Administration took the necessary actions to suspend for the duration of the JPOA sanctions on non-U.S. persons engaged in transactions related to Iran's petrochemical exports, certain trade in gold and precious metals with Iran, and the provision of goods and services to Iran's automotive sector. In addition, the United States government will license transactions for spare parts, inspections, and associated services necessary for safety of flight for certain Iranian aviation. To qualify for relief under the sanctions suspension, these transactions must be initiated and completed during the JPOA period. More details on these suspensions can be found in the guidance published today: <http://www.state.gov/p/nea/rls/220049.htm>.

The JPOA and associated sanctions suspensions will be in force for six months. This includes allowing Iran access to a limited sum of its funds restricted abroad, allocated in installments over the next six months. All sanctions relief is contingent upon Iran's continuing adherence to the nuclear steps outlined in the initial understanding in Geneva and detailed in the technical commitments made subsequently. If it is determined that Iran has failed to meet these commitments, the United States Government, will revoke this limited sanctions relief.

As the United States and our partners in the P5+1 explore the possibility of a long-term, comprehensive agreement that would prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon and provide confidence that Iran's nuclear program is exclusively peaceful, the Administration will continue to fully enforce all sanctions not explicitly suspended in this first step, including the comprehensive U.S. embargo and sanctions affecting Iran's ability to sell oil and access the international financial system.

Additional information:

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2014/01/220046.htm>

[http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Programs/Documents/jpoa\\_faqs.pdf](http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Programs/Documents/jpoa_faqs.pdf)

Related Articles:

[White House on Implementation of Joint Plan of Action on Iran](#)

[State Dept. on Implementation of Joint Plan of Action on Iran](#)

[EU High Representative Ashton on Joint Plan of Action with Iran](#)

[U.S. Officials on Joint Plan of Action on Iran](#)

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### **3. U.S., Russian Leaders Discuss Afghanistan, Sochi, History (01-21-2014)**

By Jim Garamone

American Forces Press Service

BRUSSELS, Jan. 21, 2014 – Two tankers who as young men could have squared off against each other on the East German border sat in the Russian Embassy here today and talked about ways their two nations could cooperate.

Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, met his Russian counterpart, Gen. Valery V. Gerasimov, with an eye to improving the military-to-military relations between the two nations.

Dempsey spoke of the shared military history of the two nations and proposed a ceremony to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the meeting of the U.S. and Russian armies at Torgau, Germany, in April 1945.

That meeting sealed the defeat of Nazi Germany.

On political tracks, the U.S.-Russia relationship is a bit bumpy, but on the military track, Dempsey noted, there are ways these two powerful forces can cooperate.

"I always find it encouraging when I can meet with my counterparts -- especially the most influential militarily around the world," the chairman said following the meeting. "I was encouraged by his candor ... and his warmth in seeking to find ways that we can continue to advance the issues where we agree and where we can contribute to resolving those on which we disagree."

The two men also signed the 2014 Work Plan for the nations. It was the first time the chiefs of defense signed such a document. "We felt it important enough to come together and do it ourselves," Dempsey said. The Work Plan calls for 67 activities in which military personnel from both countries will work together.

"These are generally staff exercises, not maneuver exercises, although there are maneuver exercises in all domains -- air, land, sea," the chairman said during an earlier interview. "Maneuver exercises tend to be small -- battalion level or below."

Some areas of disagreement exist between the two militaries, and ballistic missile defense tops that list. Russia is opposed to ballistic missile defense for political and technical reasons. "But I'm encouraged, because we're still talking about it," Dempsey said. "The alternative would be we would all go our separate ways and we would generate another form of an arms race on that particular issue, and nobody wants that."

The points of disagreement have "never driven us to the point in our mil-to-mil contacts where we can't have the conversation," Dempsey added.

The chairman said he believes there is still room for a better understanding not only about the technical capabilities related to missile defense, "but also the threat and our intentions vis-à-vis our allies and protecting ourselves."

But the nations agree on Afghanistan.

"We agree that a stable Afghanistan and an Afghanistan that is not a sanctuary for terrorism is in our common interests," the chairman said. "They are concerned that if the Afghan security forces don't continue to receive a certain amount of support, and if the environment in Afghanistan deteriorates to the point where the central government can't control, or at least influence, events, they are concerned it will destabilize fairly quickly. The Russians are supportive of our continued presence there."

The Russians asked a number of questions about U.S. retrograde activities from Afghanistan, Dempsey said, to "gauge how quickly events in Afghanistan could change."

"In their view," he added, "it does relate to the amount of structure that NATO continues to provide there."

The Russians are looking for a tipping point in Afghanistan, the general said. "They didn't share what they thought the tipping point is," he continued, "but in their view, there clearly is one."

Other areas of mutual interest include antipiracy and counterterrorism efforts and Arctic issues.

The two men also discussed security at the upcoming Sochi Winter Olympic Games. The Russian military is working in support of civilian security organizations, and Dempsey heard Gerasimov's assessment of the task. The Russian armed forces are bringing unique military capabilities to the effort, he said, including air defense, the maritime domain, chemical and biological defense, backup medical support for civilian authorities, management of the electronic spectrum and electronic warfare and the like.

"I reiterated the fact that we would favorably consider requests from them," Dempsey said.

In a statement released yesterday, Pentagon Press Secretary Navy Rear Adm. John Kirby said U.S. commanders in the region are conducting prudent planning and preparations should support be required. Air and naval assets, including two Navy ships in the Black Sea, will be available if requested for all manner of contingencies in support of -- and in consultation with -- the Russian government, Kirby said, noting that there is no such requirement at this time.

No matter where the Olympics were being held this year, it would be a problem, Dempsey said, as international terrorists would seek to disrupt the games no matter where they were held. But having the games near Chechnya and Dagestan brings its own set of threats, he noted.

Gerasimov has "a hand-picked, highly trained task force that's been in place for some time," Dempsey said. "He believes they have in place the intelligence apparatus, as well as the response apparatus, to deal with the threats as they know them this year in Sochi."

And, the Russian general is interested in American technology for countering improvised explosive devices that the Russian military might be able to use, the chairman said. The United States would share technical information on the counter-IED efforts, he added, and if it is compatible with Russian equipment, will look to provide that information to Russia in time for the games.

The Russian military is holding a tank biathlon next year, and the United States will observe "with the eye on participating downstream," Dempsey said. The biathlon, he added, could have a Russian T-90 tank competing against a U.S. M-1 tank sometime in the future.

Biographies:

[Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey](#)

Related Sites:

[Special Report: Travels with Dempsey](#)

[State Department Fact Sheet on Russia](#)

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#### **4. Ambassador Power at U.N. Security Council Debate on Middle East (01-20-2014)**

*Remarks by Ambassador Samantha Power, U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations, at a Security Council Debate on the Middle East, January 20, 2014*

Thank you, Mr. President, thank you for joining us here today and for chairing this critical session. Thank you Secretary General Ban, Mr. Deputy Secretary General. And thank you also Foreign Minister Judeh for your remarks.

Mr. President, ministers, colleagues, the Middle East has often been prey to the turbulence of conflicting forces, but rarely have we seen efforts toward peace and the staggering human costs of war so vividly and simultaneously evident.

This contrast is especially striking in Syria, where diplomatic initiatives have intensified against the backdrop of an ever more brutal civil war. The best way to begin to end that war is through the Geneva II talks scheduled to start in Switzerland on Wednesday. My government has been working closely with the international community and the Syrian Opposition Coalition to prepare for that conference. We welcome the Coalition's courageous decision this past weekend to participate in the talks, the purpose of which is implementation of the Geneva Action Group Communiqué. That document calls for the establishment, based on mutual consent, of a transitional governing body with full executive authority, including over military and security entities. It is vital that all participants in the opening ministerial and subsequent talks support that core goal. As of this morning, Iran still has yet to demonstrate its willingness to explicitly and publicly subscribe to the full implementation of the Geneva communiqué that is a minimum requirement for participation in this peace process.

Mr. President, the Syrian government's recent and deadly bombing campaign -- including the use of SCUD missiles and "barrel bombs" -- in the Aleppo and Damascus suburbs provides a further demonstration of the Asad regime's cruelty and of the fact that there is no military solution to this conflict. That is why we are so focused on a negotiated political transition of the type to be discussed in Geneva.

The urgency of diplomatic progress is highlighted by the deepening of the humanitarian crisis created by the war and by the Syrian government's failure to implement the Council's October 2 presidential statement. In recent days, the Syrian regime has seemingly agreed to improve humanitarian access to besieged areas, but we haven't seen evidence of meaningful implementation on the ground. For months, communities including Yarmouk, East Ghouta, Darayya, Old City of Homs, and Mouadhamiya have been besieged and cut off from food and medical supplies. And it is not just the case that food can't get in. People, starving people, desperate people, can't get out. And in the very rare occasions that evacuations from besieged areas are organized, the regime has taken inhabitants away to be screened. In many cases the whereabouts of those individuals are unknown and remain unknown today.

East Ghouta is an egregious example of Syrian obstruction. This is an area where international chemical weapons inspectors were allowed access, but 160,000 civilians remain cut off from humanitarian aid. Pro-Assad snipers regularly target residents attempting to travel through checkpoints. The government has blockaded fuel supplies and residents have electricity for only a couple of hours a day. A young child even died of carbon monoxide poisoning because his family had been compelled to burn firewood inside their house to keep warm. Let us be clear: if inspectors can obtain access to East Ghouta, so too should the providers of medicine and food.

Yarmouk provides another tragic example. It has been under constant siege since July 2013. Recent reports of more than a dozen malnutrition-related deaths among children and other Palestinian residents are horrifying and should shock the conscience of all of us. We received reports from the UN in recent days that UNRWA was able, finally, to carry in a small amount of food parcels: 200 parcels that will feed 1,000 people for one month. There are 18,000 people in Yarmouk who are under siege, lacking food and medicine. It is devastating to imagine how starving people will divide up the food parcels. Humanitarian providers who managed to deliver these parcels literally had to dodge sniper fire.



Although the regime is primarily responsible for denying humanitarian assistance, some opposition groups have also been culpable in such communities as Nubl, Zahra and Fuo. This is unacceptable. The deliberate blocking or withholding of life-giving aid by any party cannot be justified and must stop now – before more innocent people die.

Mr. President, the plight of Syrian civilians and refugees is heartbreaking and makes last week's conference in Kuwait all the more important. The United States pledged \$380 million in new funds to help tackle the crisis, bringing our total commitment since the fighting began to more than \$1.7 billion. We welcome the new pledges from other donor nations, as well as the international community's renewed commitment to assist the Syrian people and the neighboring countries that are providing a safe haven for refugees.

In the brief period before Geneva II, and as the talks go forward, it is critical that we make concrete progress on humanitarian access issues. We must also do everything that we can to halt the violence. To that end, we call urgently on all parties to agree on local ceasefires and to move ahead with prisoner releases.

We commend, Mr. President, your country of Jordan for sheltering some 600,000 refugees and we recognize the enormous economic and social toll the conflict has taken on your country. Jordan has opened its doors for an emergency situation and we know that that is draining its domestic resources. The international community has an obligation to ensure that Jordan's generosity does not become an unsustainable burden on its population.

In Lebanon, the situation has grown even more perilous, as the Syrian war has exacerbated the security, financial, and social pressures faced by the nation's leaders. More than 1,600 Lebanese communities bear the burden of hosting more than 900,000 refugees from Syria. My government continues to help Lebanon tackle its massive challenges via the recently-established International Support Group (ISG), and we urge other donors also to provide aid that is consistent with ISG priorities.

A stable and united Lebanon, with strong democratic institutions, is in the best interests of the Lebanese people and of citizens throughout the Middle East. In that context, we encourage formation of a new cabinet to address the country's security, economic and humanitarian challenges and to meet its international obligations.

The Syrian civil war has contributed to rising sectarian violence and political friction inside Lebanon. As has been said, the December 27 assassination of the widely-respected former finance minister, Mohammad Chattah was an outrage. The January 2 suicide bombing in southern Beirut's Haret Hreik neighborhood killed five people and wounded many more. Meanwhile, sporadic violence has continued for weeks in Tripoli and near the Syrian border. To that end, we note Saudi Arabia's commitment – announced last month – to provide generous amounts of additional aid to the Lebanese Armed Forces. We will continue to partner closely with Lebanon's security services, which have a pivotal role to play in support of Lebanon's security and its sovereignty.

We condemn the violence and urge all parties to exercise restraint, and commend the LAF for their efforts to stem the violence. The Lebanese government's policy of disassociation from the Syrian conflict, as enshrined in the Baabda declaration, must be upheld.

It is equally vital that all relevant Security Council resolutions be implemented, including numbers 1559 and 1701, which call for the disbandment and disarmament of all militias in Lebanon. The

United States strongly condemns the December 29 rocket attack that was launched from Lebanese territory into Israel.

Finally, we welcome the start of the trial before the Special Tribunal for Lebanon of four persons charged with the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri and others who were killed in the bombing. This trial is a positive step toward justice and away from the acceptance of impunity for political violence. We commend the Lebanese Government and other donor countries for supporting the court.

Turning to the subject of Middle East peace, the United States is continuing its efforts to assist the Israelis and Palestinians in reaching a final-status agreement that recognizes two states for two peoples, living side-by-side in peace and security. Secretary of State Kerry returned to the region earlier this month in support of a proposed framework that addresses all core issues. As the parties consider the difficult decisions ahead, the United States remains convinced that the benefits of peace – for both sides – can best be achieved through the kind of process in which we are presently engaged.

Accordingly, the United States reiterates its view that all parties should refrain from actions that might undermine the atmosphere required for ongoing negotiations. Steps that diminish trust, such as continued settlement activity, only feed skepticism on both sides.

Further, we are deeply troubled by the escalation of violence leading to civilian casualties and condemn rocket attacks from Gaza into Israel and the attempt to kill civilians by placing a bomb on a public bus in Tel Aviv.

We are also seriously concerned about the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip, and urge all parties to cooperate in expanding access for people, goods, and humanitarian supplies.

The consistent support of peace efforts by key partners is essential. We particularly welcome the European Union's generous pledge last month to provide "unprecedented" political and economic support for Israel and the Palestinians in the context of a final status peace agreement. We are gratified, as well, by the decision of the Arab League, whose representatives met with Secretary Kerry in Paris on January 12, to reaffirm its commitment to these negotiations.

Finally, Mr. President, on Iraq, I thank the Secretary General for reporting on his recent visit and would like to commend the United Nations Assistance Mission and the High Commissioner for Refugees for their efforts to ensure the delivery of aid to the people of Anbar Province. The U.S. strongly condemns the attacks carried out by forces affiliated with Al-Qaida in Anbar and elsewhere in Iraq. Their brazen attempt at destabilization cannot be allowed to succeed. As this Council, in its recent statement made clear, "No terrorist act can reverse the path towards peace, democracy and reconstruction, which is supported by the people and Government of Iraq and the international community." In that spirit, we are encouraged by the cooperation being shown by Iraq's government, its national security forces, and local tribal leaders in trying to restore stability, resist terrorist aggression, and ease the hardships faced by Iraqi civilians.

Mr. President, I too note that, in the United States, today is a national holiday. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. taught the citizens of my country and people everywhere to pursue justice and the resolution of differences by peaceful means. In his words, "returning violence for violence multiplies violence, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars." The wisdom in that warning is always and everywhere relevant, but never more so than now in the Middle East, where peace initiatives demand our support amid the anguish of continued conflict.

Thank you.



## **5. State Dept. Facts on U.S. Support for Transition in Syria (01-18-2014)**

*U.S. Department of State, Office of the Spokesperson, Washington, DC, January 17, 2014*

### **The Syrian Crisis: U.S. Assistance and Support for the Transition**

The United States supports the Syrian people's aspirations for a democratic, inclusive, and unified Syria. President Bashar al-Asad has proven through his brutal and repressive tactics that he cannot lead Syria's transition. His continued tenure only inflames tensions throughout the region and fuels extremism on both sides of the conflict.

The United Nations estimates that more than 130,000 people have been killed since the unrest and violence began over two years ago. The number of civilians fleeing Syria and seeking refuge in neighboring countries has increased sharply as violence has escalated. More than 2.2 million people affected by the conflict are now refugees in neighboring countries while, inside Syria, an additional 6.5 million people are displaced and 9.3 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance. The UN Security Council has condemned the Asad regime's denial of humanitarian relief access to these civilians in need and urged immediate steps to facilitate the expansion of humanitarian relief operations throughout the country.

At the Humanitarian Pledging Conference for Syria in Kuwait January 15, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry announced that the United States would contribute an additional \$380 million to Syrian humanitarian relief efforts – bringing the total U.S. humanitarian commitment to more than \$1.7 billion, the largest of any nation. These resources support international and non-governmental organizations assisting those affected by the conflict both inside Syria and across the region.

The United States is also providing nearly \$260 million in direct non-lethal support to the moderate Syrian opposition. This assistance is helping the Syrian Opposition Coalition, local opposition councils and civil society groups provide essential services to their communities, extend the rule of law, and enhance stability inside liberated areas of Syria. These funds are also being used to provide non-lethal assistance to moderate factions of the Supreme Military Council (SMC) of the Free Syrian Army, which is contesting extremist groups for leadership of the struggle against the Asad regime.

### **Diplomatic Support to End the Conflict**

Efforts to find a diplomatic solution to the Syria crisis are based on the Final Communiqué of the 30 June 2012 Action Group meeting in Geneva. The process set forth by the Communiqué is supported by the United States and the broad partnership of nations known as the "London 11" that are pressing for a negotiated political solution to the Syria conflict. The U.S. has been working vigorously to advance Syria's transition through the "Geneva II" international conference based on the Communiqué: the establishment of a transitional governing body formed by mutual consent, exercising full executive powers over all government institutions. The transitional governing body will also be charged with establishing a national dialogue, reviewing the constitutional order and legal system, and preparing for and conducting free and fair elections.

Simultaneous U.S. diplomatic efforts are helping coordinate the provision of assistance with other partners and allies in support of the Syrian opposition. Diplomatic efforts also seek to further isolate the regime, both politically and through comprehensive sanctions; to support the Syrian people's calls for an end of Asad's rule; and to reinforce the Syrian opposition's vision of a democratic post-Asad Syria.

## **Humanitarian Assistance**

The United States and the international community are working tirelessly to provide humanitarian assistance to those affected by the brutal conflict in Syria. At the Humanitarian Pledging Conference for Syria in Kuwait on January 15, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry announced that the United States would continue to increase its humanitarian contributions for those affected by the ongoing conflict in Syria. About half of the more than \$1.7 billion in U.S. humanitarian assistance is being distributed to organizations working inside Syria, with the balance going to assist those affected by the conflict who have fled to other countries, and to the communities that host them.

The United States is providing emergency medical care and supplies, shelter, food, clean water, relief supplies, access to education and protection – including activities to prevent and respond to gender-based violence – to those affected by the crisis inside Syria and in neighboring countries. U.S. assistance supports the activities of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the World Food Program (WFP), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and other international and nongovernmental organizations, both within Syria and within the regional refugee response in Lebanon (more than \$76 million), Jordan (more than \$61 million), Iraq (nearly \$20 million), Turkey (nearly \$31 million) and Egypt (more than \$12 million).

In response to growing incidents of gender-based violence during the conflict, the U.S. is also providing psychosocial support for women and children from Syria through women’s health centers, mobile clinics and outreach workers. In September 2013, Secretary Kerry launched an initiative to help humanitarian agencies hire staff and develop programs to protect women and girls in global emergencies, including Syria. The U.S. is also building awareness and support for survivors of gender based violence into its broader assistance programming for those affected by the conflict.

Within Syria, U.S. humanitarian assistance is reaching more than 4.2 million people across all 14 of the country’s governorates through the United Nations, international and non-governmental organizations, and local Syrian organizations, as well as in coordination with the Syrian Coalition’s Assistance Coordination Unit (ACU). To ensure the safety of recipients and humanitarian workers and to guard against assistance being blocked while en route to beneficiaries, U.S. humanitarian assistance is often not branded or marked. The U.S. supports approximately 260 field hospitals and makeshift clinics across Syria. These facilities have treated nearly one million patients and performed more than 190,000 surgeries. To meet the need for more medical staff capable of saving lives, the U.S. trained more than 1,500 volunteers inside Syria to provide emergency first aid care.

The United States continues to work closely with governments in the region hosting refugees fleeing Syria. For more details on the U.S. humanitarian response to the Syria crisis and what U.S. humanitarian assistance is being provided, visit [www.usaid.gov/crisis/syria](http://www.usaid.gov/crisis/syria).

## **Non-lethal Transition Assistance to the Syrian Opposition**

The United States is working in partnership with the international community to assist the Syrian opposition to meet daily needs, provide essential services, and support a transition and is providing nearly \$260 million in non-lethal transition assistance to the moderate opposition. These funds include a \$15 million contribution to the multi-donor Syria Recovery Trust Fund. The purpose of this fund is unite and coordinate international donors to help with Syria’s current reconstruction and economic needs in liberated areas and after the formation of a Transitional Governing Body.

Assistance is being provided to a range of civilian opposition activists, including local councils, civil society organizations and the Syrian Coalition (SOC) to bolster their institutional capacity, create linkages to among opposition groups inside and outside Syria, and help counter extremism. These efforts enable the Coalition to deliver basic goods and essential services to liberated communities. For example, in close collaboration with the Coalition's Assistance Coordination Unit (ACU), U.S. assistance is being used to procure equipment and critical supplies for prompt disbursement to communities inside Syria. This equipment includes generators to power water pumps and bakeries; ambulances to reinstate emergency medical services; crane, dump, and fire trucks for urban sanitation and civil defense; and water storage units to provide access to potable water. Other critical supplies provided through this assistance include educational kits for teachers, students and school administrators, winterization materials including blankets and heaters and commodity baskets for needy families. These efforts help the national-level opposition groups provide for the needs of local communities.

Through a series of small cash and in-kind grants, the U.S. is helping to strengthen grassroots organizations and local administrative bodies— a foundation of democratic governance – as they step in to fill the void left by the regime and provide basic services, including emergency power, sanitation, water, and educational services to their communities. Some of this assistance is being directed to maintain public safety, extend the rule of law, and enhance the provision of justice to improve local stability and prevent sectarian violence.

U.S. non-lethal assistance includes training and equipment to build the capacity of a network of over 2,000 grassroots activists, including women and youth, from more than 100 opposition councils and organizations from around the country to link Syrian citizens with the Syrian opposition and local councils. This support enhances the linkages between Syrian activists, human rights organizations, and independent media outlets and empowers women leaders to play a more active role in transition planning.

Support to independent media includes assistance to community radio stations providing news, including information for refugees about available services; training for networks of citizen journalists, bloggers, and cyber-activists to support their documentation and dissemination of information on developments in Syria; and technical assistance and equipment to enhance the information and communications security of Syrian activists within Syria. U.S. technical and financial assistance to the ACU's Media Unit is supporting the Coalition's outreach to Syrians through the internet; local, independent radio stations; and satellite television.

The United States continues to assist in laying the groundwork for accountability by supporting the Syrian Justice and Accountability Center's efforts to document violations and abuses of international human rights law and violations of international humanitarian law committed by all sides of the conflict, and by bolstering the capacity of civil society organizations to build the foundations for lasting peace. The United States also works at the grassroots levels with groups and individuals across a broad spectrum of Syria's diverse religious and ethnic communities to empower women, religious leaders, youth, and civil society to advocate for their communities, build trust, tolerance, and mitigate conflict.

In addition to this transition assistance, the U.S. has been increasing direct non-lethal assistance to the SMC since the spring of 2013 along supply lines periodically contested by the regime or extremist fighters. To date, this includes over 408,000 halal food rations, vehicles and over three tons of medical supplies as well as planned deliveries of satellite access equipment, laptops, radio communication equipment, and medical kits to moderate SMC elements.

## **Assistance to the International Effort to Eliminate Syria's Chemical Weapons**

The United States remains firmly committed to the elimination of Syria's chemical weapons arsenal, as outlined in the U.S.-Russia Framework and United Nations Security Council Resolution 2118. The process of removing chemical weapons from Syria for destruction has begun. To this end, the United States has contributed tens of millions of dollars in assistance to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)–UN Joint Mission to safely package and remove chemical weapons materials from Syria for elimination by the international community. U.S. assistance includes outfitting a U.S. ship with proven hydrolysis technology to neutralize safely at sea the most dangerous of Syria's chemical agents and precursors. For more information please click here: <http://www.state.gov/t/217199.htm>.

## **Additional Support for the Syrian People**

To help Syrians begin to rebuild, the U.S. Department of Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) issued a Statement of Licensing Policy inviting U.S. persons to apply for specific licenses to participate in certain economic activities in Syria. The OFAC Statement focused on applications to engage in oil-related transactions that benefit the Syrian Coalition, or its supporters, and transactions involving Syria's agricultural and telecommunications sectors. OFAC also amended Syria General License 11 to authorize the exportation of services and funds transfers in support of not-for-profit activities to preserve and protect cultural heritage sites in Syria.

A new limited waiver of the Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act of 2003 authorizes the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of Industry and Security to process license applications for the export and re-export of certain commodities, software, and technology for the benefit of the Syrian people, including but not limited to: water supply and sanitation; agricultural production and food processing; power generation; oil and gas production; construction and engineering; transportation; and educational infrastructure.

The United States continues to engage Syrians directly, offering academic advising to young people hoping to study in the United States and opportunities to participate in State Department exchanges and other outreach programs. The State Department is also working with a range of Syrian, American, and international partners to protect Syria's rich cultural heritage – including archaeological sites, historic buildings, monuments, and collections of objects – and to halt the trade of looted Syrian cultural property in international antiquities markets. See <http://icom.museum/resources/red-lists-database/red-list/syria/> for more information.

The State Department maintains an active dialogue to coordinate policy and assistance for Syria with a broad cross-section of Syrian opposition groups, including with the Syrian Coalition offices in Turkey and the United States. The American people, including Syrian-Americans, have contributed generously and have organized to provide assistance to Syrians in need.

The most effective way people can assist relief efforts is by making cash contributions to humanitarian organizations that are conducting relief operations. A list of humanitarian organizations that are accepting cash donations for disaster responses to help Syrians in crisis can be found at [www.cidi.org](http://www.cidi.org).

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## **6. Syrian Peace Talks to Begin Amid Escalating Violence (01-17-2014)**

By Sonya Weakley  
Staff Writer

Washington — In the wake of dramatically escalating violence against civilians in Syria, a heightened sense of urgency surrounds the United Nations–led peace talks set to begin January 22 in Montreux, Switzerland.

The conference, known as Geneva II, represents the concerted bilateral efforts of the United States and Russia to bring together delegations from the Syrian regime of President Bashar al-Assad and Syrian opposition groups to begin negotiations on a transitional government with full executive powers.

Establishing a governing body by mutual consent “is the only way to bring about an end to the civil war that has triggered one of the planet’s most severe humanitarian disasters and which has created the seeding grounds for extremism,” U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said.

Kerry, who will attend the conference, said he and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov worked closely together to bring the regime and opposition groups together. The two countries “are in full agreement that we have to do all we can in order to begin the process in Geneva, a process that we all understand will be difficult and will take some time. But we must begin and we must begin now,” Kerry said.

The conference, set to begin January 22, will focus on implementing a six-point plan, known as the Geneva I communiqué, that emerged from a U.N.-led “action group” meeting of Western and Arab nations in Geneva in June 2012. The plan calls for a Syrian-led transition toward a democratic, pluralistic nation guided by the rule of law and respecting rights of all its people and all communities, regardless of ethnicity, sect or gender.

Despite recent Syrian government efforts to reframe the meeting toward a discussion of terrorism, Kerry recently reiterated that “the purpose is specifically and solely to implement the 2012 Geneva I communiqué.” He added that “any names put forward for leadership of Syria’s transition must ... be agreed to by both the opposition and the regime. That is the very definition of mutual consent.”

Members of an alliance of opposition groups known as the Syrian Opposition Coalition General Assembly met January 17 in Istanbul to decide whether to attend the conference, but they adjourned for the night without reaching a decision. The assembly is attempting to represent the various concerns of numerous factions within the opposition.

Representatives from more than 30 countries will attend the first day. Two days later, only three parties will be involved when the conference reconvenes in Geneva. Lakhdar Brahimi, the U.N and Arab League special envoy to Syria, will lead the talks between delegations from the Syrian opposition and the regime.

Another major objective of the conference is to gain the regime’s complete commitment to allow U.N. humanitarian agencies full access to the country to supply food and medical supplies. The United States recently committed \$380 million for humanitarian assistance, bringing the total U.S. contribution to \$1.7 billion.



“None of this will matter ... unless the money goes to the people who need it. And this will only change the situation on the ground if the Assad regime stops blocking aid workers from reaching besieged communities and stops using starvation as a weapon of war.”

More than 130,000 lives have been lost since the war began in March 2011, and millions have lost their homes and security. It is estimated that 8 million people are displaced and well more than 2 million are refugees in neighboring countries.

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## **7. Obama Announces Reforms for NSA Data-collection Program (01-17-2014)**

By Cheryl Pellerin  
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, Jan. 17, 2014 – President Barack Obama today announced a series of reforms for a controversial National Security Agency data-collection program that he said would give Americans confidence their privacy is being protected and allow U.S. intelligence and law enforcement agencies to continue safeguarding the nation.

The president delivered remarks at the Department of Justice, presenting results of the administration's review of U.S. signals intelligence programs, seven months after some of the NSA's most sensitive surveillance programs were leaked by former NSA contractor Edward Snowden.

In December, the president's Review Group on Intelligence and Communications Technologies recommended more than 40 changes at the NSA in a wide-ranging report.

Obama also issued a presidential policy directive about U.S. SIGINT activities that he said will clearly prescribe what the United States does and does not do with respect to overseas surveillance.

And he said he has made clear to the intelligence community that the United States will not monitor the communications of heads of state and government of its close friends and allies unless there is a compelling national security purpose.

“What's really at stake is how we remain true to who we are in a world that is remaking itself at dizzying speed,” Obama said.

“Whether it's the ability of individuals to communicate ideas, to access information ... or to forge bonds with people on other sides of the globe,” he added, “technology is remaking what is possible for individuals and for institutions, and for the international order.”

Over the last six months the president said he has created the outside Review Group on Intelligence and Communications Technologies to make recommendations for reform, consulted with the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board, listened to foreign partners, privacy advocates and industry leaders, and with those in his administration has considered how to approach intelligence in an era of diffuse threats and technological revolution.

Everyone who examined the problems, Obama said, recognizes that the United States has real enemies and threats and that intelligence serves a vital role in confronting them. They also recognized that challenges to privacy do not come from government alone, the president said.



“Corporations of all shapes and sizes track what you buy, store and analyze our data, and use it for commercial purposes,” Obama said. “That’s how those targeted ads pop up on your computer and your smartphone periodically. But all of us understand that the standards for government surveillance must be higher.”

Among the reforms, Obama approved a new presidential directive for SIGINT activities at home and abroad.

The guidance, he said, will strengthen executive branch oversight of intelligence activities and ensure that the United States takes into account security requirements and alliances, trade and investment relationships, and a commitment to privacy and basic liberties.

Every year the administration will review decisions about intelligence priorities and sensitive targets, the president said. The reforms will also provide greater transparency about surveillance activities and fortify safeguards that protect the privacy of U.S. persons.

“Since we began this review, including information being released today, we’ve declassified over 40 opinions and orders of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court, which provides judicial review of some of our most sensitive intelligence activities, including the Section 702 program targeting foreign individuals overseas and the Section 215 telephone metadata program,” Obama said.

The president said he is directing the Director of National Intelligence, along with the attorney general, to annually review and when possible declassify future opinions of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court with broad privacy implications and report to the president and Congress on the efforts.

At the Pentagon, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel said he fully support Obama’s outlined reforms as the defense secretary and as former co-chair of the President's Intelligence Advisory Board and a former member of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence.

“These programs must always balance the need to defend our national security with the responsibility to preserve America's individual liberties and the president's decisions and recommendations will do that,” Hagel said.

“They will help restore the confidence of the American people and our allies and partners, they will preserve important capabilities that keep us safe,” he added, “and they will help the men and women of America's military continue to accomplish their missions all over the world.”

Obama also is calling on Congress to authorize the establishment of a panel of advocates from outside government to provide an independent voice in significant cases before the court.

And the administration will provide more protections for activities conducted under Section 702, which allows the government to intercept the communications of foreign targets overseas who have information that is important for U.S. national security.

The FBI relies in during investigations on National Security Letters, which can require companies to provide information to the government without revealing the orders to the subject under investigation.

But in the interest of transparency, Obama said he has directed the attorney general to amend how the letters are used so such secrecy will terminate within a fixed time unless the government demonstrates a real need for further secrecy.

And the administration will let communications providers make public more information about the orders they receive to provide data to the government, Obama said.

Regarding reforms of Section 215, the bulk collection of telephone records, Obama repeated that the program does not involve the content of phone calls or the names of callers.

The program grew out of a desire to address a gap identified after 9/11 and was designed to map the communications of terrorists, the president said, and it consolidates the phone records into a database the government can query if it has a specific lead.

“The Review Group turned up no indication that this database has been intentionally abused and I believe it is important that the capability this program is designed to meet is preserved,” Obama said, adding that he thinks critics are right to point out that without proper safeguards such a program could be used to give more information about private lives and open the door to more intrusive bulk-collection programs in the future.

“I am therefore ordering a transition that will end the Section 215 bulk-metadata program as it currently exists and establish a mechanism that preserves the capabilities we need without the government holding this bulk metadata,” the president said.

Because more must be done to determine how a new system will work, Obama has ordered that the transition proceed in two steps:

1. Starting now, investigators will pursue only phone calls that are two steps removed, rather than three, from a number associated with a terrorist organization. Obama directed the attorney general to work with the FIS Court so during the transition the database can be queried only after a judicial finding or in the case of a true emergency.
2. Obama said he told the intelligence community and the attorney general to use this transition period to develop options for a new approach in which the government doesn't hold the metadata but that matches capabilities and fills the gaps the Section 215 program was designed to address.

The president said officials will report back to him with options before the program comes up for reauthorization on March 28, and meanwhile Obama will consult with congressional committees and then seek congressional authorization for the new program.

To make sure the reforms are put in place, Obama said he is making important changes to how the government is organized.

The State Department will designate a senior officer to coordinate diplomacy on technology and SIGINT issues, the White House will appoint a senior official to implement the new privacy safeguards, and the president will devote resources to centralize and improve the process used to handle foreign requests for legal assistance, “keeping our high standards for privacy while helping foreign partners fight crime and terrorism,” he said.

Obama also has asked his counselor, John Podesta, to lead a comprehensive review of privacy and big data, a term describing a massive volume of structured and unstructured data that is difficult to process using traditional database and software techniques.

“While the reforms that I have announced will point us in a new direction, I am mindful that more work will be needed in the future,” Obama said. “One thing I’m certain of: this debate will make us stronger. And I also know that in this time of change, the United States of America will have to lead.”

Biographies:  
[Barack Obama](#)

Related Sites:  
[Remarks by the President on Review of Signals Intelligence](#)

Related Articles:  
[NSA Chief: Surveillance Stopped More Than 50 Terror Plots](#)  
[Leaks Damage National Security, NSA Director Says](#)

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## **[8. White House Fact Sheet on Review of U.S. Signals Intelligence \(01-17-2014\)](#)**

In the latter half of 2013 and early 2014, the United States Government undertook a broad-ranging and unprecedented review of our signals intelligence programs, led by the White House with relevant Departments and Agencies across the Government. In addition to our own intensive work, the review process drew on input from key stakeholders, including Congress, the tech community, civil society, foreign partners, the [Review Group on Intelligence and Communication Technologies](#), the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board, and others. The Administration’s review examined how, in light of new and changing technologies, we can use our intelligence capabilities in a way that optimally protects our national security while supporting our foreign policy, respecting privacy and civil liberties, maintaining the public trust, and reducing the risk of unauthorized disclosures. On January 17, 2014, the President delivered a speech at the Department of Justice to announce the outcomes of this review process.

In that speech, the President made clear that the men and women of the U.S. intelligence community, including the NSA, consistently follow those protocols designed to protect the privacy of ordinary people and are not abusing authorities. When mistakes have been made, they have corrected those mistakes. But for our intelligence community to be effective over the long haul, we must maintain the trust of the American people, and people around the world. To that end, the Administration has developed a path forward that we believe should give the American people greater confidence that their rights are being protected, while preserving important tools that keep us safe, and that addresses significant questions that have been raised overseas. Today the President announced the Administration’s adoption of a series of concrete and substantial reforms that the Administration will adopt administratively or seek to codify with Congress, to include a majority of the [recommendations made by the Review Group](#).

### **New Presidential Policy Directive**

Today, President Obama issued [a new presidential policy directive](#) for our signals intelligence activities, at home and abroad. This directive lays out new principles that govern how we conduct signals intelligence collection, and strengthen how we provide executive branch oversight of our

signals intelligence activities. It will ensure that we take into account our security requirements, but also our alliances; our trade and investment relationships, including the concerns of our companies; and our commitment to privacy and basic liberties. And we will review decisions about intelligence priorities and sensitive targets on an annual basis, so that our actions are regularly scrutinized by the President's senior national security team.

### **The Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court (FISC)**

Since the review began, we've declassified over 40 opinions and orders of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court, which provides judicial review of some of our most sensitive intelligence activities – including the Section 702 program targeting foreign individuals overseas and the Section 215 telephone metadata program. Going forward, the President directed the Director of National Intelligence, in consultation with the Attorney General, to annually review – for the purpose of declassification – any future opinions of the Court with broad privacy implications, and to report to the President and Congress on these efforts. To ensure that the Court hears a broader range of privacy perspectives, the President called on Congress to authorize the establishment of a panel of advocates from outside the government to provide an independent voice in significant cases before the Court.

### **Section 702 of Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act**

Section 702 is a valuable program that allows the government to intercept the communications of foreign targets overseas who have information that's important to our national security. The President believes that we can do more to ensure that the civil liberties of U.S. persons are not compromised in this program. To address incidental collection of communications between Americans and foreign citizens, the President has asked the Attorney General and DNI to initiate reforms that place additional restrictions on the government's ability to retain, search, and use in criminal cases, communications between Americans and foreign citizens incidentally collected under Section 702.

### **Section 215 of the PATRIOT Act**

Under Section 215 of the PATRIOT Act the government collects meta-data related to telephone calls in bulk. We believe this is a capability that we must preserve, and would note that the Review Group turned up no indication that the program had been intentionally abused. But, we believe we must do more to give people confidence. For this reason, the President ordered a transition that will end the Section 215 bulk metadata program as it currently exists, and establish a program that preserves the capabilities we need without the government holding the data.

This transition has two steps. Effective immediately, we will only pursue phone calls that are two steps removed from a number associated with a terrorist organization instead of three. The President has directed the Attorney General to work with the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court so that during this transition period, the database can be queried only after a judicial finding, or in a true emergency. On the broader question, the President has instructed the intelligence community and the Attorney General to use this transition period to develop options for a new program that can match the capabilities and fill the gaps that the Section 215 program was designed to address without the government holding this meta-data, and report back to him with options for alternative approaches before the program comes up for reauthorization on March 28. At the same time, the President will consult with the relevant committees in Congress to seek their views, and then seek congressional authorization for the new program as needed.

## **National Security Letters**

In investigating threats, the FBI relies on the use of National Security Letters (NSLs), which can be used to require companies to provide certain types of information to the government without disclosing the orders to the subject of the investigation. In order to be more transparent in how the government uses this authority, the President directed the Attorney General to amend how we use NSLs to ensure that non-disclosure is not indefinite, and will terminate within a fixed time unless the government demonstrates a need for further secrecy.

We will also enable communications providers to make public more information than ever before about the orders they have received to provide data to the government. These companies have made clear that they want to be more transparent about the FISA, NSL and law enforcement requests that they receive from the government. The Administration agrees that these concerns are important, and is in discussions with the providers about ways in which additional information could be made public.

## **Increasing Confidence Overseas**

U.S. global leadership demands that we balance our security requirements against our need to maintain trust and cooperation among people and leaders around the world. For that reason, the new presidential guidance lays out principles that govern what we do abroad, and clarifies what we don't do. The United States only uses signals intelligence for legitimate national security purposes, and not for the purpose of indiscriminately reviewing the e-mails or phone calls of ordinary people.

What we don't do: The United States does not collect intelligence to suppress criticism or dissent. We do not collect intelligence to disadvantage people based on their ethnicity, race, gender, sexual orientation, or religion. And we do not collect intelligence to provide a competitive advantage to U.S. companies, or U.S. commercial sectors.

What we will do: In terms of our bulk collection, we will only use data to meet specific security requirements: counter-intelligence; counter-terrorism; counter-proliferation; cyber-security; force protection for our troops and allies; and combating transnational crime, including sanctions evasion.

The President has also decided that we will take the unprecedented step of extending certain protections that we have for the American people to people overseas. He has directed the Attorney General and DNI to develop these safeguards, which will limit the duration that we can hold personal information, while also restricting the dissemination of this information.

People around the world – regardless of their nationality – should know that the United States is not spying on ordinary people who don't threaten our national security and takes their privacy concerns into account.

This applies to foreign leaders as well. Given the understandable attention that this issue has received, the President has made clear to the intelligence community that – unless there is a compelling national security purpose – we will not monitor the communications of heads of state and government of our close friends and allies. And he has instructed his national security team, as well as the intelligence community, to work with foreign counterparts to deepen our coordination and cooperation in ways that rebuild trust going forward.

While our intelligence agencies will continue to gather information about the intentions of governments – as opposed to ordinary citizens – around the world, in the same way that the

intelligence services of every other nation do, we will not apologize because our services may be more effective. But heads of state and government with whom we work closely, on whose cooperation we depend, should feel confident that we are treating them as real partners. The changes the President ordered do just that.

## **International Engagement**

To support our work, the President has directed changes to how our government is organized. The State Department will designate a senior officer to coordinate our diplomacy on issues related to technology and signals intelligence. The Administration will appoint a senior official at the White House to implement the new privacy safeguards that we have announced today. And the President has also asked his Counselor, John Podesta, to lead a review of big data and privacy. This group will consist of government officials who—along with the President’s Council of Advisors on Science and Technology—will reach out to privacy experts, technologists and business leaders, and look at how the challenges inherent in big data are being confronted by both the public and private sectors; whether we can forge international norms on how to manage this data; and how we can continue to promote the free flow of information in ways that are consistent with both privacy and security.

The President also announced that we will devote resources to centralize and improve the process we use to handle foreign requests for legal assistance, called the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT) process. Under MLAT, foreign partners can request access to information stored in the United States pursuant to U.S. law. As the concentration of U.S.-based cloud storage providers has increased, so has the number of MLAT requests. To address this increase, we will speed up and centralize MLAT processing; we will implement new technology to increase the efficiency and transparency of the process; and we will increase our international outreach and training to help ensure that requests meet U.S. legal standards. We will put the necessary resources in place to reduce our response time by half by the end of 2015, and we will work aggressively to respond to legally sufficient requests in a matter of weeks. This change will ensure that our foreign partners can more effectively use information held in the U.S. to prosecute terrorists and other criminals, while still meeting the strict privacy protections put in place by U.S. law.

In addition to the initiatives that were announced by the President, the Administration’s review affirmed our commitment to ongoing initiatives:

## **Consumer Privacy Codes of Conduct**

Two years ago, the President released a Blueprint for Consumer Privacy in the Digital Age as a “dynamic model of how to offer strong privacy protection and enable ongoing innovation in new information technologies.” Following the release of the Blueprint, the Administration has convened the private sector, privacy experts, and consumer advocates to develop voluntary codes of conduct to safeguard sensitive consumer data. Last summer a multi-stakeholder group completed the first such code on how mobile apps should access private information. The Department of Commerce is continuing this multi-stakeholder process, aiming to launch the development of new codes of conduct in 2014.

## **Commitment to an Open Internet**

Maintaining an open, accessible Internet, including the ability to transmit data across borders freely is essential for global growth and development. We will redouble our commitment to promote the free-flow of information around the world through an inclusive approach to Internet governance and



policymaking. Individuals in the 21st century depend on free and unfettered access to data flows without arbitrary government regulation. Businesses depend increasingly on agreed data-sharing regimes that allow information to move seamlessly across borders in support of global business operations. Developing countries and small businesses around the world in particular have a lot at stake, and much to lose from limitations restricting the Internet as an engine of prosperity and expression. Requirements to store data or locate hardware in a given location hurt competition, stifle innovation, and diminish economic growth. And they undermine the DNA of the Internet, which by design is a globally-distributed network of networks. We will continue to support the multi-stakeholder, inclusive approach to the Internet and work to strengthen and make more inclusive its policy-making, standards-setting, and governance organizations.

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